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COMMONWEAL

EDUCATION ISSUE

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Julia Ann Upton

TEACHING HISTORY AT HIGH NOON
Thomas Leckey

SHAKESPEARE'S EMBRACE
David R. Carlin, Jr.

BOOKS

FRANCIS FLAHERTY on Bill Buckley's Gratitude
RAYMOND A. SCHROTH on Charles Curran & academic freedom
DANIEL M. MURTAUGH on Grown-up baby boomers

THE 'JUST WAR' WAR Francis X. Winters

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CORRESPONDENCE

Attention, publishers

Derby Line, Vt.

To the Editors: Laurel leaves to *Commonweal* for its series of articles on contemporary Catholic writing.

After thirty-eight years of teaching in Catholic colleges and seminaries, I can assure you there's a whole army of men and women out there who want to write and are capable, but who could use some guidelines and examples.

Why not collect the articles and publish a book? REV. THOMAS J. BEARY

A boost from Buchanan

Honolulu, Hawaii

To the Editors: Four stars and a scepter of gold for the editor responsible for the first item ("With Friends Like These") under Et Cetera in your issue of February 22. Certainly, the very best argument for sainthood for Bishop Spong would be the opposition of Pat Buchanan.

FRED R. METHERED

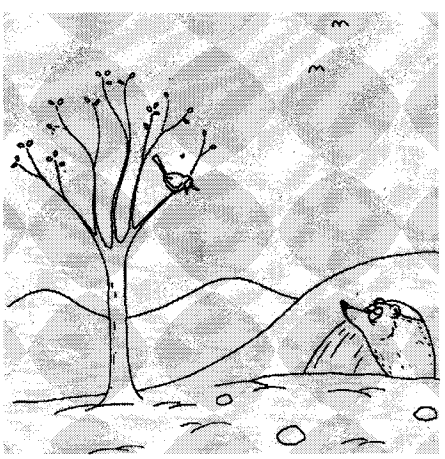
The canons roar

Ithaca, N.Y.

To the Editors: With regard to the cartoon credited to M.L. Zanco appearing in your issue of February 22, page 117, with its caption, "There are no priests, bishops, or cardinals up here [in heaven]; we're just one happy laity"—I suggest that you reread the canons of the Council of Trent, which clearly teach the permanent character imparted by priestly ordination (cf. DS 1767, 1774). M.L. Zanco, *anathema sit.*

WILLIAM K. KLIMON

From the Editors: It seemed clear to us from the context that the cartoonist was not referring to the *Roman Catholic* heaven. The anathema is withdrawn.



"Don't you remember? You asked for an April wakeup call!"

Reviewer wrong

Maryknoll, N.Y.

To the Editors: Leonard Fein's review [January 25] of my book, *Beyond Innocence and Redemption: Confronting the Holocaust and Israeli Power*, represents an angry but, alas, typical rewriting of my text to fit his anguished sensibilities regarding the state of Israel and the organized Jewish community's support of that state. To do this, he isolates sentences and sometimes words outside of both their written context and the context of the argument itself. Fein, like many other Jewish progressives, finds a strong but nuanced argument difficult, as it goes beyond their own increasingly discredited analysis and suggests action to replace paralysis with regard to the Middle East.

Fein's argument is tailored to keep the Jewish people and the Christian reader of *Commonweal* in that place of paralysis. Meanwhile, Fein and others provide the cover for oppressive Israeli policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians to continue, as they most certainly will. As I point out in the book, those policies threaten to destroy the ethical values and thus the tradition we as Jews have inherited. What is needed to forestall this destruction is a radical re-evaluation of our history and our newfound power to find a way beyond being either victim or oppressor, and to integrate Palestinian life and culture into Jewish life and culture. This is absolutely essential, though I would not deny its difficulties. However, instead of trying to denigrate my own nascent work, would Fein perhaps suggest something that moves beyond the failed intellectual and theological framework that he and others have been parading before us for more than two decades?

In my travels around the U.S. and in different parts of the world, it is clear that Jews, Christians, and Palestinians are searching for new insight on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its impact on the theological and moral traditions we carry forth. Fein's implicit charge of Christian anti-Jewishness and Jewish self-hatred (and even—may God forgive us—that Palestinans might find an argument interesting, encouraging, and even important) is now falling on deaf ears. Though I hardly expect complete agreement, respectful attention might be in order, rather than the time-worn punishment of summary excommunication. This is what Rabbi Marshall Meyer of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in New York City suggested when he wrote of my book, "A searching, haunting, and disturb-

(Continued on page 236)

Correction: Owing to an editing error, the name of the late Primate of Poland was twice misspelled in J. Bryan Hehir's column on former Vatican Secretary of State Agostino Casaroli [February 8]. The correct spelling: Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski.

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COMMONWEAL

CONTENTS

Volume CXVIII, Number 7

Correspondence	210
Editorials	211
Shakespeare's embrace: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	214
A sacred place...still: *Abigail McCarthy*	215
Father, I'm pregnant: *Julia Ann Upton*	217
The 'just war' war: *Francis X. Winters*	220
Teaching history at high noon: *Thomas Leckey*	223
Poetry: *Leonard A. Temme*	224
Mary Rudbeck Stanko	227
Screen: *Richard Alleva*	226
Stage: *Gerald Weales*	228

BOOKS

Gratitude: *Francis Flaherty*	230
Catholic Higher Education, Theology, and Academic Freedom: *Raymond A. Schroth*	231
Beyond the Boom: *Daniel M. Murtaugh*	234

STAFF

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Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

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Beyond racial politics

One of the more obvious and bitter ironies of President George Bush's JanuaryState of the Union message was its perfunctory discussion of domestic issues, especially its one-sentence nod to the nation's deepening racial divisions. America continues to find it easier to answer the call to "selfless" sacrifice on foreign shores and moral crusades in pursuit of a "new world order" than to face disorder and despair in our cities and among our most disadvantaged. Abroad the vocabulary of virtue is flaunted shamelessly; at home any corresponding call to sacrifice and justice is judged naive. Abroad America boasts of galvanizing the "community" of nations; at home the word community is the dross left from the combustion of competing self-interests. "The problems before us may be different, but the key to solving them remains the same," Bush recited the mantra. "It is the individual—the individual who steps forward."

But individuals do not step forward in a vacuum. None of us makes it on our own. Equal opportunity is a social achievement, and government has an important role to play in promoting it. For more than a decade the federal government has absented itself from much of the hard work of creating opportunity for the most needy, and absolved itself from moral responsibility in that area. Today, America's inner cities are in crisis, if not a free-fall, many of their African-American communities desolate. Poverty, crime, violence, and drugs deprive millions of what is necessary for human dignity. Clearly, a higher standard of both vision and action in race relations is desperately needed.

Such a program must address the economic realities that are foreclosing opportunity for many. Today's service- and information-based economy, with its increasing separation of the rich from the middle and working classes and its amnesia about the poor, offers less and less opportunity for the ill-educated. With fewer and fewer semi-skilled or manufacturing jobs available—and those at stagnant or decreasing real wages—getting on the road to upward mobility is more difficult than ever. Hope and aspiration, the most powerful engines of any economy, are in short supply for too many Americans. No society can afford to squander such resources. Private employers should be given supports and incentives to hire the unemployed. But if the private economy cannot provide jobs for the unskilled, government, at either the state or federal level, should. A program like the Civilian Conservation Corps might be considered. Everyone who is willing to work should be given an opportunity to do so. As we can see from the condition of our bridges and public spaces, there is plenty of work to be done. Useful work is the best antidote to the cycles of dependency afflicting the underclass. The personal and social value of dignified employment, as much as the material reward, is what the disenfranchised need if they are to be integrated into American society.

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Government is only half the equation, however. The seemingly intractable crisis facing the predominantly black urban underclass calls for a fundamental reevaluation of our assumptions about the conundrums of race. The nature of this renewal has been explored by the black writer Shelby Steele (*The Content of Our Character*, St. Martin's) as well as by white liberal activists such as Jim Sleeper (*Closest of Strangers*, Norton). For Steele, much of the solution must now come from the African-American community itself. He thinks institutional racial barriers have been largely dismantled, and that the familiar rhetoric and psychology of victimization is now the greater enemy. Similarly, Sleeper criticizes the politics of racial grievance and confrontation. He calls for a turning away from legalistic solutions and a return to community action capable of developing interracial electoral majorities around nonracial concerns. Both argue that the politics of civil rights as traditionally practiced cannot solve today's problems.

The legal attack on segregation and discrimination has put in place powerful remedies for intentional discriminatory practices. It is the move from individual equality of opportunity to a more democratic equality of results and representation that stymies us now. The redistribution of power and economic opportunity that democratic politics once accomplished through the patronage system is much more problematic when written into law. Moreover, under the Reagan-appointed Supreme Court, civil rights statutes have been interpreted narrowly, making it harder to prove discrimination or implement affirmative action programs. It should be clear that the path of progress no longer leads through the courts. A retreat from rights-oriented politics and racial polemics and a return to coalition building is not just the better answer—it may be the only hope.

Roy L. Brooks, a black professor of law at the University of Minnesota, puts it bluntly: "African-Americans cannot wait to be rescued by the government" (*Rethinking the American Race Problem*, University of California). Like Steele, Brooks warns that the black community cannot dwell on its anger, no matter how legitimate its grievances. Indeed, it must root out the self-destructive behavior such anger encourages. Brooks notes that the relative success of integration has tragically intensified the hopelessness of ghetto life. Blacks who have "made it" have taken their skills and resources out of the black community. Without the example and stability of middle-class families, the deterioration of the underclass may be irreversible. Consequently, the newly enfranchised black middle class must help poor and working-class blacks to help themselves. Brooks proposes a self-help program, where middle-class blacks work one-on-one with households in the inner cities, tutoring them in the fundamentals of both social responsibility and the survival skills needed in a white culture.

Different times and different enemies require different strategies and tactics. Brooks does not dismiss the importance of the political or legal struggle, nor does he minimize the hold racism still exerts on American society. The recent incident captured on videotape of police brutality in Los Angeles has reminded us all of racism's continuing power. But Brooks recognizes that the success of legal and material assistance will depend on the ability of the black community to put it to good use. At first glance such realism may appear to undermine the idea of government intervention. But that need not be the case. Instrumental social policies—programs of income and housing support, job training, welfare reform, and child care, for example—will provide the necessary material complement to the voluntaristic efforts of the black community itself.

The majority of working- and middle-class Americans, both black and white, have more in common with one another than they do with the interests that have long divided them. But our racial stalemate will not be broken until the poor and the middle class reappropriate a shared civic culture. Realizing true equal opportunity will require a much greater degree of economic and social equality of condition between the poor and the rest of us. That is the difficult truth that awaits a persuasive political voice.

REVERTING TO FORM

The dust settles, the uncounted dead are buried, the oil wells continue to burn, and a permanent cease fire with Iraq remains to be signed. The destruction in both Kuwait and Iraq is immense, and the death tolls high. Kuwait has been liberated, but its peoples and its government are in disarray and unexpectedly hesitant about how to restore their country. International law has been upheld, but in Iraq, Hussein and the Baath party remain in power, at least for the moment. While encouraging Hussein's overthrow, the U.S. is not overtly supporting his opponents, either the Shiites sympathetic to Iran in the south or the Kurds eager for autonomy in the north. Repelling Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait and curtailing Iraqi power was a seeming political necessity and a plausible moral good. But the war is not over. And neither is the political and moral assessment of the war. Much remains unknown and unresolved.

American policy goals are largely unarticulated and suggest at each crucial turn an improvisational character. George Bush displayed considerable technical and political acumen in waging war and sustaining the international coalition to support it, but does he have any idea of how to forge peace or stability in the region as a whole?

The question arises because the administration is already backpedaling on the idea of curtailing conventional arms sales to Arab countries. F-16s are on their way to Egypt, and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will soon be weighing in with arms requests of their own. This is dismal news. And there is possibly more. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell contended that a significant U.S. military presence will be required in the Gulf for some unspecified period. Americans have been encouraged to draw the most simplistic moral and political conclusions about our military triumph over the "fourth largest army in the world." But with victory comes responsibility, or so we are now being told. We cannot

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abandon our Arab allies, we cannot leave a political "vacuum," we cannot open the door for Iran...or Syria...or the Soviet Union, etc. In other words, we cannot leave—at least not very soon.

Domestically, President Bush and his Republican allies are eager to exploit the political benefits military victory brings. But reality in the Middle East is less malleable than American public opinion. Intra-Arab and intra-Islamic hatreds remain, if they have not been exacerbated. Israel and the Palestinians are still locked in a mutually suffocating embrace. In rallying the nation to war, Bush spoke idealistically of the rule of law and pragmatically of the legitimate interest America has in regional stability. He promised that Operation Desert Storm would "not be another Vietnam." But while our military engagement with the Iraqis was short and quick, our entanglement in the region promises to be long, less clear-cut, and much less satisfactory. If we have upheld the principle of sovereignty and international law, we have also forcibly inserted ourselves into a part of the world we know too little about and seem to have little aptitude for understanding. Yes, we have national interests in securing the flow of oil. Rearming our allies in the region, some say, is the best way to protect those interests. But it is hard to see how fueling another round of arms selling—with its quantum increase in lethality—serves the national purpose or the rule of law we fought to uphold.

If we don't supply the weapons, someone else will, comes the pragmatic answer of the administration. But that is not so much deeply cynical as woefully unimaginative, short-sighted, and ultimately futile. And it underestimates our actual power and influence in the region. Given all that has happened, it is especially odd that the administration seems to be slipping toward repeating the manifest failure of its prewar policy of coddling oligarchies and dictators. This was our attitude toward repeating Saddam Hussein before his invasion of Kuwait suddenly turned him into "Hitler." April Glaspie, our former ambassador to Iraq, now says that Hussein fooled everyone—that no one thought he could be so "stupid" as to invade Kuwait. But the stupidity of pouring the fuel of more arms on the smoldering ruins of the Middle East seems as obvious as Hussein's own hubris.

President Bush adopted a high moral tone in moving the nation to war. If he is not to prove himself simply mercenary—and if we are not to contribute to another cycle of violence in the Middle East—we should forgo the political and economic rewards of rearming our allies. If others do it, so be it. (Yet why, we also want to ask, isn't the sturdy good will of coalition politics sufficient to dissuade England, France, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and others from repeating the race to export arms?) The U.S. has better things to do with our expertise and industry—at home. More important, our long-term interests, as well as the long-term interests of the peoples of the Middle East, lie not in weapons' sales, but in the democratic political reform of the region's nations. An equitable distribution of wealth, a more balanced dispersion of power, and a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian question are the essential components to regional stability.

THE GULF WAR

HEADS & HEARTS AT ODDS

MEASURING OUR ACQUIESCENCE

When our parish had a discussion of the Gulf war on February 3, one of the stalwarts reported himself, a habitual anti-war person, amazed at his support for the war. Even more surprising, he found, was his general approval of George Bush's actions, from sending troops to Saudi Arabia down to the air war itself. Like many people, he had hoped that the sanctions would work. But he was also deeply concerned about the Kuwaitis who remained in their country under Iraqi occupation. What was happening to them? His calculations—based on the view that the war began not on January 15 but August 2 with the invasion of Kuwait—roughly followed just-war principles and led him to support the war.

As I sat listening, I saw my obsessive reflections and mental gymnastics being clarified in his straightforward and unadorned assessment. Perhaps I had not, as I feared, fallen into an intellectual juggernaut, propelling me to support of the war, a conclusion that I hadn't been able to come to during Vietnam or our other military adventures thereafter, and frankly a conclusion I had never expected to come to again.

Perhaps my surprise and that of my fellow parishioner lay in our applying the theory to the Gulf crisis and unexpectedly concluding that this war could be justified. Of course, this was nothing to be jubilant about. Nor, after a cease fire, can we evade many questions: Did the bombing of Baghdad go beyond necessary means? Did the assault on withdrawing Iraqi troops exceed any properly military goal? Were fuel-air bombs used not just over mine fields, but also against troops? With this, as with many aspects of the Gulf war, World War II came to mind. Then, a just war ended in employing disproportionate means, the fire-bombing of Dresden for one, and the use of atomic weapons for another. We should not have done those things. Yet we were right to go to war against Hitler and we were wrong to have waited so long in resisting him. We were right as well to go to war against Saddam Hussein though it is probable that things were done that should not have been. On these grounds alone, there are people, friends of *Commonweal* and friends of mine, who think that the just-war theory has collapsed as a moral measure and simply become another political tool used to support war. And there are some who think it's perfectly sound but all too easily abused.

Efforts to "justify" war always seem bloodless and hyper-rational. And when a moral calculus enters in, all the more do such efforts seem coldly to discount the frailty of the human body and the human psyche. Watching the bombing of Baghdad on CNN, my imagination flew to the claustrophobic atmosphere

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of bomb shelters, of parents comforting terrified children and trying to reassure each other. Thinking about the air assault on dug-in Iraqi troops, especially those who may have been dragooned into service, I thought about the numbing terror that endless bombardment brings and its after-life in the dreams of those who survive. Where is the "fit" between these people and just-war theory?

The fit comes, I believe, when we begin to think of Kuwaiti bodies and souls, and of the threat to other bodies and souls, of Saudis, of Israelis, if Saddam Hussein had become the dominant regional power. This, of course, was the sound part of President Bush's rejoinder to the challenge of Bishop Edmond Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal church, when Browning visited the White House in December to protest the momentum toward war. Mr. Bush's efforts to explain and justify U.S. actions were not otherwise compelling, but this uncharacteristic flash of solidarity with the Kuwaitis resonated with my own sense of where the weight of the argument fell. But just cause and just means are different things.

In his briefing of February 28, as a cease fire was being arranged, General Norman Schwarzkopf said that the loss of even one human life is tragic. He is right. Every loss is disproportionate. Yet many human lives were lost before the U.S. and its allies ever fired a shot. And yes, many Iraqi ones were lost when we finally did—but also Israeli and Saudi lives—and American, British, French, and Egyptian lives too. Equally critical, many human lives would have been lost in Kuwait, and perhaps elsewhere, had we done nothing at all. Any theory that tries to draw moral limits and conditions can seem a shabby exercise in the face of the loss of even one human life.

For those who are not pacifists, as I am not, the use of force and the turn to war require that we take some measure of our acquiescence in national policy. Just-war theory, paltry though it seems, is one means that all citizens, religious or not, have available as such a measure as well as a goad to our consciences. It makes us more suspect of the reasons our government goes to war and more critical about how that war is conducted. I was not sorry to see George Bush—inept though his treatment was—turn to just-war theory or to hear military briefers voice its prohibitions against civilian targets. This response is a far cry from Vietnam; indeed, it is a far cry from World War II. Rather than a tool for supporting the war, just-war theory seemed to me one that helped to limit it. Perhaps as the outcomes and consequences of the war are more fully exposed, and if the means are found disproportionate, it will be just-war theory that will help us Americans look more soberly at the immensity of our military power and think more critically about when and how that power should be used. If we prove to have been wrong in warring against Iraq, just-war criteria will force us to acknowledge that. If we have not, those criteria and the appeal to them will have averted a disaster worse than the one we now have before us.

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels is the editor of Commonweal.

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

SHAKESPEARE'S EMBRACE

THE VALUES OF EUROCENTRISM

On its positive side the current crusade against "Eurocentrism" has, I suppose, certain merits. For instance, it is good to be reminded that the European cultural world is not the only one that has ever existed; that other cultural traditions are rich and richly deserve our care and attention; that to study those competing traditions will help us to see the shortcomings of our own tradition while helping us to deal better with contemporaries who are heirs to those alternative cultural heritages.

But to speak of the positive aspects of anti-Eurocentrism is a bit like speaking of the constructive aspects of dynamite. Anti-Eurocentrism is an essentially negative movement. Despite its rhetoric of ecumenical understanding, of polycultural open-mindedness, its essential aim is to dethrone the high tradition of European culture. Its purpose is to reduce European culture from the status of primacy it has claimed for itself to a status of equality, where it will be no better than one culture among many.

There is, of course, a political agenda lurking behind this cultural program. During several centuries of Western expansion European claims of cultural superiority have served to delegitimize native cultures in the non-European world, thus making those societies easy pickings for Western imperialism. Cultural hegemony made straight the way for political hegemony; the missionary opened the door for the conquistador. But if you turn the tables, if you delegitimize the delegitimizers, then you advance the liberation of the third world. If European cultural supremacy goes, can Western political supremacy be far behind?

Moreover, this program of cultural-political liberation is intended not just for those people residing in third-world countries but for third-world individuals and groups dwelling within the boundaries of the Western world, e.g., Algerians in France, blacks and Hispanics in the U.S. Such individuals are invited to shrug off the burden of Plato and Dante and Greta Garbo, thereby freeing themselves to get in touch with their roots, enabling them to draw strength from their own collective and immemorial souls. (By "Hispanics," of course, we do not mean Spaniards; we mean Africans and Native Americans whose forebears in recent centuries fell victim to Spanish linguistic imperialism. When we liberate these poor souls from the forced embrace of Shakespeare, it is certainly not in order that they might throw themselves into the arms of Cervantes.)

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It is not clear what cultural role is to be played by those of us descended from what might be called the vanquished races of Europe. My own ancestry, for instance, is Celtic. Time was when my forebears ruled nearly all of the European subcontinent. Once we were even on the verge of seizing the Roman Capitol—until those damned sacred geese began honking. That was our high-water mark. Later Julius Caesar gave us a terrible drubbing. Then the Germans drove us out of all the good real estate in Britain. Today, sad to say, the only remnant of our ancient glory is a basketball team in Boston. What shall our part be under the new dispensation? Shall we learn Gaelic? Wear a kilt? Practice Druidism perhaps? Or go on pilgrimage to Stonehenge? Alas! Oppressed though I am by such Mediterranean types as Cicero, Leonardo, and Puccini, I'm not sure I am up to this species of liberation. My Celtic soul, I fear, lost its native hue somewhere in the labyrinthine ways of history, till now it is rinsed through and through with the deep and alien dyes of Judaism, Hellenism, Romanism, and Germanism. If we act quickly we may yet rescue the poor Patagonians from the poisons of cultural imperialism; but the Celts are a lost cause.

Anti-Eurocentrism is so foolish an enterprise that it is difficult to know where to begin its refutation. Yet refuted it needs to be. For, nonsensical though it may be, it is a fashionable kind of nonsense, the kind that has wide appeal nowadays. In the name of tolerance and open-mindedness (who could oppose such virtues?), we are permitted to abandon the hard work that goes with maintaining cultural standards and keeping an ancient heritage in good repair; and at the very moment we are indulging in this laziness and irresponsibility, we are allowed to pat ourselves on the back for having risen to a level of moral and intellectual superiority. Unlike the vile Eurocentrists, we are not bigots, we have not sinned against the light, we don't have the blood of Montezuma on our hands. *Écrasez l'infâme*!

One point of departure for a refutation is to note that the anti-Eurocentrists confound two quite distinct notions of culture. On the one hand is the anthropological notion, where "culture" means the way of life of a people: its language, religion, moral code, political system, etc. On the other hand is the Matthew Arnold notion, where "culture" means "the best that has been thought and said in the world." In the former sense of the word, every society is equally cultured—a forest tribe of New Guinea no less than Periclean Athens or Elizabethan England; and every individual is just as cultured as every other—Billy Sunday and Reverend Ike no less than Erasmus and Thomas More. But in the Arnold sense, culture is a rare and high achievement. Societies and individuals can be ranked in a hierarchy according to how much of this high culture they possess, most possessing very little.

Culture in the anthropological sense is inevitably ethnocentric, subject to all the shortcomings of ethnocentrism: it is narrow, prejudiced, chauvinistic, inclined to overrate itself and its people while underrating the outside world; and the more this culture is unleavened by culture in the higher sense, the more complacent and even xenophobic it tends to be. But culture in the Arnoldian sense is the diametric opposite of this. This higher culture is broad, enlightened, and catholic. It is the sternest critic of ordinary culture. (In fact, before Arnold hit upon the word "culture" he used the term "criticism" to designate essentially the same thing.) It is only insofar as ordinary culture takes this criticism to heart and allows itself to be permeated by elements of the higher culture that it rises somewhat above its merely local nature and takes on the flavor if not the full substance of cosmopolitanism.

Culture in the anthropological sense is by definition particularistic, therefore unsuited for the human race as a whole. But culture in the higher sense is universalistic, therefore indispensable for the creation of a worldwide culture.

To confound these two concepts of culture, to denounce St. Paul and Mozart because of the deficiencies of ordinary European culture, is not just a mistake; it is a mistake of a particularly perverse type. It is the kind of mistake made by the men tied up in the dark Platonic cave, who so loved their darkness that they killed the liberator who was about to lead them to light. Anti-Eurocentrism is but the latest disguise worn by the children of darkness, who are now what they have always been, the enemies of humankind's enlightenment and emancipation. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

A SACRED PLACE...STILL

WHERE BABIES CRY & TODDLERS FUSS

"Could we go back and look at the church again?" my grandnephews asked after a family funeral in my hometown. The question, posed to their mother, surprised me. Why would such lively youngsters want to return to the church when they had a whole town to roam? But then I realized that they, children of suburbia, had never seen a church like the church of my childhood. Since birth they had been taken to worship in the multipurpose halls and auditorium-like churches of sprawling new parishes.

The towering high altar in our century-old church, with its painted and gilded statues carved of wood, the graphic Stations of the Cross marching along the walls, the stained glass windows, the vaulted ceiling, all were sources of wonder and curiosity to them.

There are many such neo-Gothic, steepled brick churches in old neighborhoods and small towns all across America. They are cool and dim, faintly redolent of the incense of decades, and reminiscent of encounters with the sacred. And, like our St. Felix, their impress on the consciousness of generations of Catholics was deep. I can shut my eyes and see it as it was in my time. The crucifixion group

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dominated the altar piece. St. Felix, of whose biography we were never sure but for whom the first pastor, a French missionary, was named, rode high above. St. Boniface flanked the center on one side, St. Patrick on the other, sealing the uneasy union of parishioners of German and Irish descent. The Blessed Virgin, on her altar, was accompanied by two saints chosen as models for Catholic youth, St. Aloysius Gonzaga and another whose name everybody now seems to have forgotten. St. Joseph, on his altar, stood between St. Agnes and St. Teresa of Avila.

Memories crowd back. Of midnight Mass, glorious with candles ablaze in all the available candelabra and the full-throated caroling of the choir. The procession to end the Forty Hours devotion, with all the girls wearing the white dresses of last summer over lumpy winter underwear, strewing blossoms of begonia and geranium (mine from my grandmother's kitchen) before the Blessed Sacrament. The lift of the *"Pange Lingua"* and the monotony of the sung litany. The relief when the *"ora pro nobis"* and the *"orate pro nobis"* gave way to *"libera nos, Domine."* Requiem Masses were sung by the school children on weekdays for dead parishioners—five-dollar Masses we called them. (One-dollar Masses were consigned to the missionaries elsewhere, a source of conflict for my great-aunt Nell who had to balance her belief that more Masses were better with her desire to have Masses for the family dead announced from the pulpit.) The year went by in a series of devotions and novenas—rosary devotions in October, Stations of the Cross in Lent, Marian devotions in May, Rogation Days in summer, evening Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday all year round.

It was a self-enclosed parish life. Father John *was* the church, and the sisters, too, in a subordinate way. We saw the bishop every four years or so, when he came for confirmation, but we felt little connection to him. The pope was a dim and distant figure, certainly never in the newspapers or on the radio.

Our faith was militant. We knew all the arguments in defense of the one true faith and all the errors of Protestants and nonbelievers. We patronized the Catholic undertaker and subscribed to the local newspaper owned by a Catholic. Mixed marriages were cold affairs, performed before the fireplace in the rectory parlor, *sans* flowers, music, and blessings.

Our faith was also a wary walk between the safety of rule and the always present possibility of sacrilege and sin. When I was in grade school, daily Communion was unheard of—only one cadaverous maiden lady approached the altar at daily Mass, and there was debate over whether she was a saint or a bit mad. Sunday Communion was allowed only at the early Mass. The endless High Mass, with its hour-long sermon, was a test of endurance.

To me, today, the wonder of St. Felix is not that which is unchanged but that which has changed so much. Perhaps it takes this journey in time, a return to the church of the thirties in one particular place and back again, to realize the extent of change since Vatican II. Those who live with gradual change are often unaware. Those who crowd into the pews of St. Felix on a Sunday now, for example, take for granted the atmosphere of a family gathering. Babies—unwelcome in my day—cry, toddlers fuss, and parents cope with no sense of strain. Women lectors and ministers of the Eucharist join lay men in the sanctuary as a matter of course. Homilies are brief and concentrate on the "good news" of the gospel.

The parish is no longer an isolated unit but clearly a part of the church universal. The bulletin abounds with invitations to the lecture series and festivals of neighboring parishes. Parishioners have adopted a church in Haiti and offer hospitality and sponsorship to its boys' choir on fund-raising concert tours. Rome is a place of frequent pilgrimage.

The biggest change of all, however, is the willingness to share faith with other Christians. The reading recommended for Lent is that authored by Joyce Hollyday, a writer for the evangelical *Sojourners* magazine. An invitation to the World Day of Prayer service from the United Methodist women is published, as is one from the local Episcopal church. At St. Felix, the windows were thrown open and the *aggiornamento* of John XXIII of blessed memory really took place.

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FATHER, I'M PREGNANT

WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

JULIA ANN UPTON

Reports from a number of sources indicate that a high percentage of women seeking abortions in the United States are Roman Catholics. Why is this the case? Whether one attributes the choice of abortion to selfishness or desperation, those statistics do not speak well for us as a community of believers. It is, after all, abundantly clear—from sermons, religion classes, official pronouncements, Catholic involvement in court cases, legislative lobbying, and demonstrations at abortion clinics—where we as a church stand on abortion. When it occurred to me that we are a great deal less clear about *alternatives* to abortion—that the messages we send about alternatives should be, but are not, as elaborate and specific as our rhetoric against abortion—I decided to test my hypothesis by involving my undergraduate theology class in a research project. This essay will report the results of the project and the reflections and recommendations it has inspired.

Of the more than one hundred students in my class, 73 percent are Catholic; of these, most are products of the Catholic school system. Nevertheless, when I broached the topic in class, it was immediately obvious that the church was the last place to which these young people would turn for help in the event of an unplanned pregnancy. Their assumption was that, since the church opposes abortion so vehemently, no one in the local parishes would be willing to help people facing this particular crisis. They also believed that once a woman obtained an abortion she would never be able to return to the church.

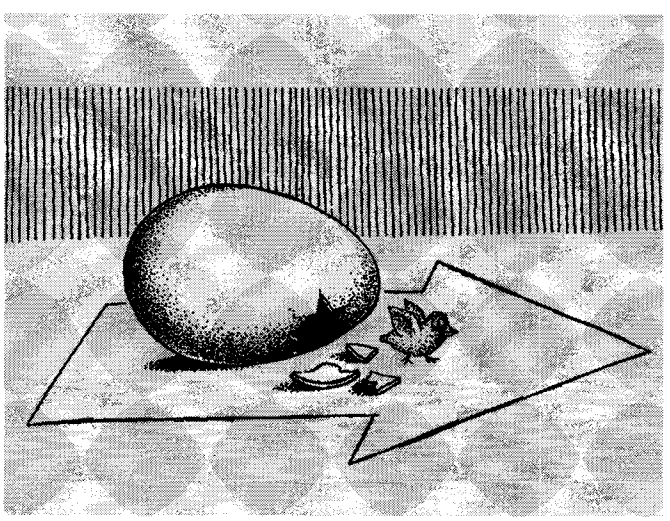
It surprised and intrigued the students when I suggested my thesis that precisely because the church strongly condemns abortion, we should expect its ministers and other representatives to support alternatives just as strongly. So I presented them with a scenario and a question and sent them off in search of answers.

Here is the scenario. Each student-participant purportedly has a close friend who has just discovered she is pregnant. Unmarried, still in college, she believes that abortion is her only choice. The student, being personally opposed to abortion, wants to help the friend consider alternatives. But what other practical choices are there? What help is available? I asked the students to start looking in their local churches for answers, and to chart the course of their investigation.

While the undergraduates were visiting churches, a graduate assistant searched recent issues of the diocesan newspaper to uncover articles or advertisments focusing on abortion alternatives. There were many articles on abortion—eleven in one issue alone—but not a single article on alternatives.

When the results of the students' research began to arrive, I was immediately impressed with the seriousness they brought to the assignment. On reflection, I realized that their enthusiasm should have been expected. Since they range in age from eighteen to twenty-seven, it is likely that many of them have lived my scenario or something close to it—either having a friend unmarried and pregnant, or being pregnant themselves, or suspecting it. This was definitely "theology in the trenches," as one of my colleagues labeled our project.

The students contacted eighty-nine churches. Although their study focused primarily on local Roman Catholic communities, they also contacted Greek Orthodox, Episcopal, Baptist, and Congregational churches as well as a local Jewish center, Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhist, and Hindu community leaders. Of the eighty-nine clergy contacted, only thirty-nine provided any suggestions for alternatives. From the remaining fifty, the response was that the woman seeking help should come back in person. When told that the friend was not yet willing to speak with a clergyperson, the respondents said the problem was too difficult for them to handle, and offered no further assistance.



JULIA ANN UPTON, R.S.M., *is associate professor in the department of theology and religious studies, St. John's University, Jamaica, New York.*

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The thirty-nine churches that responded positively to the students' requests represent several different denominations, with the Roman Catholic churches, on the whole, being less helpful than Protestant communities. One Episcopal pastor referred the student to the neighboring Lutheran pastor, a woman. The students were more surprised by the help they received at the Protestant churches than by the difficulties they encountered at Catholic parishes, because they had mistakenly assumed that only the Catholic church is opposed to abortion.

The alternatives proposed to the students ranged widely. Two students were referred, I hope by accident, to abortion clinics. One was even referred to a nursing home sponsored by Catholic Charities. Our initial list, in fact, contained forty-one different crisis centers, adoption agencies, hot-line numbers, and the like. With some help from me, the students contacted each of the forty-one to determine the extent and availability of their resources, a process that was itself sometimes frustrating. In several instances, hot-line numbers, widely advertised as serving the public twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, led me from one answering machine to another. How would that make me feel if I were pregnant, unmarried, and desperate? The checking procedures revealed a number of other instances in which the students had been provided with distinctly unhelpful misinformation. When it was complete, our list of resources had slimmed down to fourteen potential sources of real help.

Of the thirty-nine respondents who gave the researchers clues about where to go and whom to see, twenty-four made referrals to various Birthright organizations in our area, demonstrating that at least the name "Birthright" has some ring of familiarity to parish personnel. A small advertisement for Birthright appears twice a month in our diocesan newspaper, and students report that a few of their parish churches post information on Birthright as well. Another finding, however, was that the organization does not receive significant church funding and must rely almost exclusively on its own fundraising.

Interestingly, if not surprisingly, women participants in the research fared better than the men. In three unplanned instances in which the same church was contacted by both a man and a woman student, they received radically different treatment, suggesting the likelihood that the men were automatically stereotyped as culprits. As it happened, however, one male student who had a happier experience disclosed in his report that on a previous occasion he had actually lived through the project's scenario: Out of loyalty to a pregnant woman friend, he had reluctantly provided most of the money for her fifth-month abortion, and afterwards had come to feel responsible for the death of an unborn child. "Thanks to this paper," he wrote, "if it ever happens to me again I know where to find help and other alternatives."

But, I have to add, only if he was lucky enough to find another sympathetic and informed adviser. It's true that some few other students were fortunate enough to interview priests who were not only knowledgeable about abortion alternatives but willing to provide financial, spiritual, and emotional support as well. One of our campus ministers even offered to accompany my student's "friend" to Birthright. Another student wrote, "I thought it would be really hard and uncomfortable, but I felt strangely safe, almost hugged. If I were pregnant, I know I could go and not be badgered or reprimanded, but sincerely helped."

After completing her project at an upstate parish, still another student began to wonder how she would be treated if she were the one pregnant, so she went to her parish church and presented (or misrepresented) herself as pregnant and desperate. She met with the pastor, who immediately made her feel comfortable. "Never once did he make me feel dirty or cheap or tell me I should never have had premarital sex."

Monsignor offered to introduce her to women in the parish who had made three different choices—abortion, adoption, and raising the child alone—to hear their stories. He also suggested that since she was still considering abortion she ought to attend a meeting of "Rachel Weeping," a support group for women who have had abortions, to learn from them what the after-effects of an abortion might be. If she did choose abortion, though, he also told her that he would help her work through the after-effects. At the end of their session, he reminded her that he, the church, and God would always be there. "He told me to go and pray and find peace within me, and that he would be available any time—day or night," she wrote. It was a stunning encounter—and the only one of such depth recorded by any of the one hundred students.

I hope that compassionate and informed priests are more numerous than this survey suggests. That may indeed be the case, given the geographic and numerical limitations of our project. (And one does hear of areas such as the archdiocese of St. Louis where alternative programs are extensive, intelligent, widely advertised, and generously funded.) Nevertheless, our experience leads me to offer some very specific recommendations for all people who want to uphold the sanctity of life, born and unborn.

1. Turn down judgment and turn up compassion. It disturbs

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me that so many students were turned away by parishes with little or no support. These young adults lead highly stressed lives. More than 85 percent of our students hold jobs, many working forty-hour weeks while carrying a full class load. They face social pressures and cultural lures never imagined a generation ago. It may appear that they have abandoned the church, for we certainly don't see many of them at Eucharist week after week, but that is no reason for us to abandon them. They need to know God's compassion, and they can only know it through us.

My parish wasn't any help at all. They didn't seem concerned and didn't offer to see my friend. I thought they seemed uncaring and unhelpful. I feel sorry for girls who do call in need of help.

2. Don't let denominationalism interfere with protecting human life. The Episcopal pastor who referred one of the students to the Lutheran pastor on the next block taught a good lesson because he believed her to be more skilled than he. This is not a denominational issue but a life issue.

3. Identify and support alternatives to abortion with the same determination directed to other forms of prolife action.

What I gathered from this project is that the church is very uptight on this topic. For a young woman in a desperate situation the church really doesn't make many alternatives available. How realistic is it that a woman eighteen years old can raise a child on her own? How can you even feel safe to give your child up for adoption when the society we live in is so crazy?

4. Work on developing parish-based outreach programs to women in crisis—beginning with something as simple as a hotline phone number or a "life lines" corner in the parish bulletin, later developing a network among neighborhood churches so that information and services can be pooled. At the political level, begin with demanding at least proportionate funding for birth assistance as is now available for abortion.

5. Do not dismiss anyone from the arena of conversation, for conversation can lead to conversion. Remember that the students began this project already convinced that the church would never help them deal with the practical problem of dealing with the dilemmas of an unwanted pregnancy; it appeared to them that the church had ended the conversation with its condemnation. Some of them got confirmation of that assumption, others a positive revelation. Contrast, for example, the student comment quoted above after my first recommendation ("My parish wasn't any help at all...") with the attitude of another student who received a wholly different response:

Personally, I had never felt so opposed to abortion before these discussions. I wasn't for abortion, but I really knew I was able to have one, if I felt it was necessary. But through the eyes of these people, who were simple, down-to-earth, caring people, I realize that there are other solutions to problems and you don't necessarily have to take the easy way out. Life has meaning; abortion doesn't. If you accept a little help, you can bring a human life into this world.

To which wisdom I would only add, "If you give a little help, you can bring a human life into the world." □

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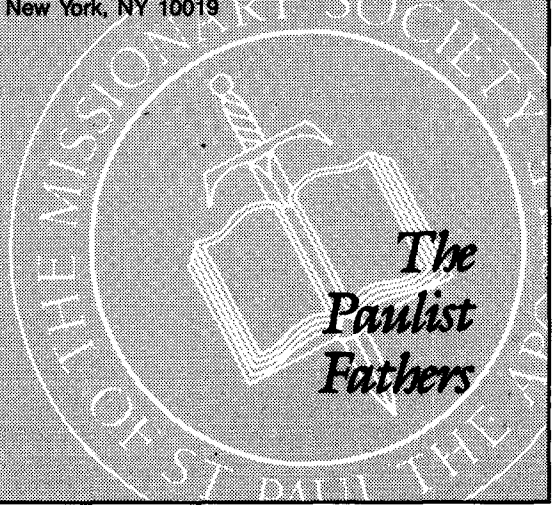

The Paulist Fathers

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THE 'JUST WAR' WAR

THE BISHOPS REACH DISSENSUS

FRANCIS X. WINTERS

In a season of surprises—the duration of Operation Desert Storm—perhaps the most arresting irony was the juxtaposition of high-tech weapons and venerable theories about their use in war. "Star-Wars" footage on TV was continually interspersed with just-war calculations about the moral choice between sanctions and assassination. It seems to have been the American bishops who set the tone of the public discussion of the war in their own traditional just-war terms. That tone was struck early, on the evening of November 12, during the "MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour," when Robert MacNeil quizzed Archbishop Roger Mahony, then chairman of the National Council of Catholic Bishops' (NCCB) International Policy Committee, on the relevance of just-war categories to the military preparations in the Gulf. That day, the NCCB had passed (249-15) a resolution in which they "affirmed and made their own" an earlier (November 7) letter from Mahony to Secretary of State James Baker, outlining the traditional just-war criteria and, without seeking to "offer a definitive judgment" on the moral legitimacy of the resort to force in these circumstances, urged that the U.S. government not go beyond the maintenance of sanctions, backed by the substantial military deployment in the region.

The resonance of the moral analysis of Operation Desert Shield/Storm continued through the week of February 4-11, when *Time, U.S. News and World Report*, and *Newsweek* delivered descriptions of the moral logic of war and expert assessments of the moral "bottom line." In a further irony, President George Bush chose the assembly of National Religious Broadcasters, not traditionally a bastion of just-war (or other natural law) thinking, to unburden himself on January 28 of his own essay on just-war thinking and the ongoing military crisis. No surprise, when Bush did his calculations, Operation Desert Shield/Storm passed moral muster.

Though the bishops had apparently succeeded in framing the terms of the public debate, they differed with the president's independent application of the theory to this war effort. For Bush seemed to ignore the logic of the two letters that Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk had sent him. Pilarczyk, archbishop of Cincinnati and NCCB president, had first addressed Bush on the topic soon after the bishops' annual meeting, informing the president of the resolution adopted on November 12, and going significantly beyond the text of the NCCB resolution itself, insisting that pursuing a sanctions policy, without resorting to force, was "a moral imperative."

In this letter, Pilarczyk cited "a significant consensus" at the NCCB meeting that the U.S. government must "pursue the course of peaceful pressure and not resort to war." The significant consensus did not, however, attain sufficient unanimity at the annual meeting to warrant formulation in a resolution. Pilarczyk then voiced his own feelings, presumably reflecting the informal consensus of the NCCB, that "offensive military action *could well violate* these criteria of the just-war theory, especially the principles of 'proportionality' and 'last resort.'" Later, on the eve of war, after the UN deadline expired on January 15, Pilarczyk again wrote to Bush, this time signaling that his own discernment of the morality of the war had shifted markedly. While in November he had estimated that the actual use of alliance forces "*could well violate* just-war theory criteria," he now concluded more certainly that Operation Desert Storm "*would likely violate*" the same principles. In less technical language, Pilarczyk concluded: "the presumption, in my view, is still [January 15] for blockades not bombs, diplomacy not destruction, words not war." For moralists, and for military personnel, this shift in terminology is weighty: replacing the judgment "could well violate" with the more certain "would likely violate" just-war criteria clearly shifts the burden of proof on to those willing to serve in this war.

There the matter stood between the Catholic hierarchy, or at least its leadership, and President Bush. Reasonable men and women could differ, it seemed, on the moral evaluation of the war. And, as is now evident, reasonable bishops can differ on the same issue. There had, of course, been statements supporting President Bush by Cardinals Bernard Law of Boston and James Hickey of Washington, seeming to differ with Archbishop Pilarczyk. Later, however, the rift in the hierarchy appeared to widen considerably. On February 17, Joseph T. Ryan, archbishop for the military services, published a pastoral letter directed to the one hundred thousand Catholic servicewomen and men in the Gulf, their families and chaplains. Ryan's letter, unlike the three earlier statements, is addressed to a segment of the Catholic community itself, rather than to political officials. Ryan's pastoral

REV. FRANCIS X. WINTERS *is associate professor of moral theology and of international affairs, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. He served in 1982-83 as a consultant to the bishops' committee drafting the pastoral letter,* The Challenge of Peace.

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letter made no reference to the three earlier episcopal statements on the war, citing instead the 1948 Christmas message of Pope Pius XII, evidently convinced of its appositeness to the present crisis: "people threatened with unjust aggression may not remain passively indifferent....The solidarity of the family of nations forbids others to behave as mere spectators in an attitude of apathetic neutrality.... Among the goods of humanity, some are of such importance for society that it is perfectly lawful to defend them against unjust aggression. Their defense is even an obligation for the nations as a whole, who have a duty not to abandon a nation that is attacked."

Ryan's letter reminding Catholics of this earlier papal teaching in similar crises was undoubtedly received as a balm, if not precisely in Gilead (Jordan), at least in nearby Araby, where many of Ryan's military charges were serving. For the pastoral letter lifted the cloud of church skepticism from the military operation by (at least implicitly) affirming the justice of the war. The publication of the pastoral suggested that Ryan was unconvinced by the argumentation presented by Pilarczyk as well as the earlier "nonjudgmental" letter of Mahony to Baker. That argumentation, implicitly challenged by the new pastoral letter, relied on three claims, namely: (1) that sanctions were a necessary and sufficient instrument to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait; that (2) the just-war criterion of "last resort" forbade reliance on any instruments to attain this goal *except* sanctions and the maintenance of forces in the Gulf; and that (3) the resort to force would likely violate the just-war principle of proportionality. Each of these claims is plausible; none, it seems, is wholly persuasive without further elaboration. Ryan's apparent public dissent from the conclusions of Pilarczyk suggested that the argument had not been conclusive even within the hierarchy itself. Ryan's reluctance to join in the "significant consensus" condemning the war may have arisen from a differing assessment of the three crucial elements in the moral argument mentioned above: the moral status of sanctions, the moral meaning of "last resort," and the moral calculus made under the rubric of "proportionality." Each of these disputed issues deserves brief mention.

The appeal to "sanctions" is new to Catholic moral argument. They are not to be found in the quiver of casuistry formerly issued to the newly ordained, or newly consecrated. The term—raised by Archbishop Pilarczyk to the level of a moral imperative—is borrowed from the realm of international law and politics, where sanctions may be employed to influence national decision-makers by denying to them access to certain indispensable forms of trade, either imports or exports or some combination thereof. If such curtailment of trade constitutes a reasonably reliable tool to force a reversal of international aggression, everyone presumably would hail its utilization as a relatively nondestructive form of coercion.

The moral argument about sanctions rests, then, on their expected effectiveness. Have sanctions ever been known to coerce a nation which has "annexed" another nation, as Iraq had seized Kuwait, to disgorge its prey? The most frequently cited survey of sanctions, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered* (Washington: Institute for International Economics, 1990), contains among its 116 case studies only one closely analogous to the Gulf crisis: the U.S. (and allied) effort in 1940-41 to discourage Japan's conquest of parts of Indochina. After a cabinet debate on the use of sanctions (including a cut-off of oil) against Japan, Franklin D. Roosevelt reduced oil exports (June 20, 1941). U.S. exports of oil products to Japan fell from 23.2 million barrels (1939) to 0.4 million barrels (August-December, 1941). Declining oil stocks may well have contributed to the decision by the Tojo government, which came to power on October 16, 1941, to advance the invasion plans before the sanctions paralyzed its war machine.

This evidence suggests that sanctions are a two-edged sword, capable of triggering aggression as well as reversing it. The moral and political ambiguity of the scant historical record of the resort to sanctions in the case of "annexation" is a matter of historical record. What, then, was the intellectual and moral basis of Archbishop Pilarczyk's endorsement of sanctions as "a moral imperative" in the present instance? His text did not elaborate.

The second claim made by the archbishop was that the resort to force without waiting to assess the impact of sanctions "would likely violate" the just-war criterion of "last resort," that is, the imperative postponement of military activities until all alternative (diplomatic/economic) measures have been exhausted. Here Ryan seems to have found himself at odds with Pilarczyk's interpretation of "last resort." Indeed, some moral theologians might find that Pilarczyk's interpretation constituted a serious misunderstanding of the traditional criterion. For the criterion, namely, that a nation which is party to an international dispute may not resort to the use of force (for example, invasion) until it has appealed to bilateral and multilateral adjudication (in this case,

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the Arab League, the World Court, the UN Security Council) has normally been understood to articulate an obligation on the party who *initiates* war. In this case, of course, that party was Iraq, which violated the territorial integrity of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. Once Kuwait was invaded by Saddam Hussein in violation of the criterion of last resort, just-war theory accorded an *immediate* right of armed resistance to Kuwait and whatever allies it could speedily gather. To argue that, after being invaded, as Kuwait was on August 2, the wronged nation must negotiate with the aggressor for an unspecified period of time, while the aggressor pillages the conquered nation, is, some have argued, to stand the just-war theory on its head. An historical analogy may shed light on the normal understanding of this principle of last resort: When Hitler invaded Poland in 1939, no Catholic bishops argued that Poland, Britain, and France were morally obliged to negotiate with Hitler or await vindication from the League of Nations or the World Court before taking up arms. If these two situations are not morally analogous in the eyes of Pilarczyk, the structure of his moral reasoning urgently deserves to be shared with the rest of the Catholic community.

In challenging the moral acceptability of the military strategy in the Gulf, the president of the NCCB had rested his rejection of war-fighting additionally on the just-war principle of proportionality. In doing so, he appealed to the core of the tradition, namely, the warning that a nation's leaders may not initiate (defensive) hostilities without making conscientious calculations of the probable destruction latent in the resort to force. Never, perhaps, had this caution been more urgent. For, in the Gulf crisis, long-standing grievances of a great variety were gathered just beneath the surface of the Gulf region, ready to erupt with incalculable power and destruction. Scrupulous caution was in order.

Yet, when Mahony spoke the first word in the bishops' campaign to urge such caution on U.S. officials, his formulation of the relevance of proportionality to the present crisis included an extremely curious question, without providing any evident reply. The question, "In this case, are the expressed values at stake so important, that is, the survival of Kuwait, repelling aggression, etc., that they justify the resort to force and the consequences of the use of force?" Archbishop Mahony's subsequent plea for rejection of the use of force suggested, indeed, that his own answer to that question was negative: The survival of Kuwait was *not* worth a war. There were many voices in America for whom this prudential calculation would be wholly unremarkable as a statement of U.S. national interests. From bishops, however, such a negative response was puzzling. For in 1983, the same conference of bishops asked itself the same question about the survival of (West) Germany. In their pastoral letter on war and peace, the bishops resoundingly endorsed (238 to 9) a revision of NATO strategy for the defense of Germany and Western Europe, even calling for an increase in defense spending in order to defend Europe's security without relying on first use of nuclear weapons.

Did some bishops now discern some *moral* difference between the survival of Kuwait and the survival of Germany? On what moral grounds did they base such a differentiation?

The handful of faithful who observed this emerging rift in the conference of bishops may have begun to feel that they were back in the late sixties, in the days of *Humanae vitae*, when the *sensus fidelium* opted to "select a confessor" in the face of public disagreement among bishops about the morality of contraception. Now, as it seemed, it was a season to "select a bishop" on the morality of the war.

Into this charged situation stepped Archbishop John Roach, of St. Paul-Minneapolis, who had recently succeeded Archbishop Mahony as chairman of the International Policy Committee. The occasion (February 25) was a meeting observing the centennial of Leo XIII's *Rerum novarum*, the charter of all Catholic social teaching. Roach signaled his message in the opening words of his address, insisting that he spoke *as a local bishop* as well as chairman of the Committee on International Policy. This theme of the local authority of the bishop was again taken up in the closing words of the address: "I frankly do not believe this [the morality of the war and its conduct] is a decision for one chairman or one committee, but for every bishop, and for that matter, every believer. Each of us will have to search our own conscience to respond to these challenges and to make our own specific judgments on the moral dimensions of the war."

Roach may be singularly suited to enter into the controversy with healing words. For, like Pilarczyk, Roach had served as president of the NCCB (1980-83); he too had been a seminary teacher and now concedes that he feels most at home as bishop when he is teaching. Like Pilarczyk, he is used to the give-and-take of intellectual debate, and is comfortable in dissenting from Pilarczyk's earlier claims that the NCCB showed a "significant consensus" against the justice of the war. Roach controverted this reading of the November meeting: "I do not believe our conference as a whole has a sufficiently clear consensus at this time to offer a decisive and united judgment on the overall moral justification of this war.... Most bishops, given the specific judgments required and the limited information available, have withheld a definitive judgment....I do not share the clarity or confidence of those who see the morality of this whole question in absolute and certain terms....The bishops' conference is a diverse body that functions best when we act with unity. We seek to share our moral judgments and raise serious questions with both conviction and modesty whenever there is sufficient consensus to permit us to speak in the name of the conference." Since, in Roach's reading of the meeting, no consensus existed in judging the war, the problem reverts to the court of first resort, the deliberation of the local bishop, speaking to the faithful of his own diocese.

With this counsel, Roach sought to make room within the church for the conflicting, indeed contradictory, views of Pilarczyk and Ryan within the limits of their jurisdictions, that is, the archdiocese of Cincinnati and the archdiocese for the military services, respectively. He made room at the same time for the judgments of all those other bishops who had, or perhaps had not yet, come to their own conclusions. Peace of a sort was established simply by citing the relative autonomy of the local bishop.

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Roach went beyond this mediatorial role, however, in raising important moral questions about Operation Desert Storm that had for different reasons been left largely undeveloped in the previous episcopal statements. He insisted on the church's traditional teaching on the limits of the violence that can be tolerated in war, citing the complementary principles of discrimination (the limitation of deliberate targeting to combatants) and proportionality (the close scrutiny of strategies to test their suitability to attain the liberation of Kuwait without the accompanying [perhaps deliberate] destruction of Iraq). In the face of President Bush's bow to the calculus of military necessity, Roach raised up the civilized standard of moral and political limits to the *scale* of war. For even the combination of precise targeting mechanisms and disciplined observance of the principle of discrimination, which still permitted the loss of civilian life and the destruction of Iraq's economic infrastructure and its cultural treasures, could be seen, in that country and in other Islamic nations, as deliberate massacre. (Roach could have quoted in this context the caution of one Arab commentator on the "MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour," who brought a discussion to an abrupt halt by pointing out to the other [American] panelists that there is no word for "collateral damage" in Arabic and no such concept in Islamic or Arabic culture.) On the eve of a season of chest-pounding in America, Roach urged, in the season of ashes, a little breast-beating. □

TEACHING HISTORY AT HIGH NOON

LETTING THE LESSONS EMERGE

THOMAS LECKEY

History has never been easy to teach, and thanks to George Bush, Saddam Hussein, and Adolph Hitler, it is made even more difficult. High school students say that it's got too many dates, too many superfluous names, and entirely too much talk of tariffs (I happen to agree with them on the latter). By college, impracticality replaces tedium as the chief disincentive. There are few jobs directly related to the discipline, and the monetary rewards are fewer still. On a deeper level, students who grow up laboring under the impression that real human problems can be solved using textbook generalities are not likely to listen patiently to the moral ambiguities real history presents.

Of course, everybody likes to have a little history on hand, either to argue a point effectively, or to follow the conversation of some history buff, or perhaps to read George Will. As Congress debated the Gulf war resolutions in January, viewers were treated to a barrage of historical analogies: references to Hitler (198), Churchill (46), and Neville Chamberlain (45) were all outnumbered by Vietnam (413), our most vivid historical memory. Obviously, then, at least some knowledge of history is helpful if we are to follow the narrative of our policymakers and make a democratic assessment of their debates.

Perhaps the most difficult hurdle for history teachers is the readiness of students, aping Hollywood, the television networks, and politicians, to substitute facile moral judgments for the objective detachment that undergirds the study of history. Politicians "moralize" history to mobilize large numbers of voters around magnetic themes, and TV does it to hook viewers quickly before remote control preempts the program. Since we all seek moral equanimity, we are vulnerable to these tricks. The problem, however, is that history, especially modern history, often ends in moral ambiguity rather than certainty.

For example, in 1952 when Americans flocked to see Gary Cooper give his Academy Award-winning performance in *High Noon*, they thought it a traditional Western, one where a lone courageous sheriff dispensed justice from a gun barrel despite the objections of cowardly "appeasers." Much later, social historians suggested that American viewers might have sensed a subliminal cold-war parable in Cooper's travails. Similarly, future historians may note the ironic juxtaposition of this year's Hollywood blockbuster, *Dances with Wolves*, and our involvement in the Persian Gulf war. In the more recent film, Kevin Costner's camera dramatizes American genocide against native peoples. In the wider world, President George Bush justifies war by accusing Saddam Hussein of being another Hitler—another genocidal murderer. Are we guilty, as Costner suggests, or righteous, as Bush proclaims? If we're guilty in the first instance, are we being too quick to judge in the second?

All of this hand-wringing raises interesting questions for those, like myself, who teach history. To the extent that presidents and producers popularize history, we are indebted. To the extent that they burden students of history with simplistic moral conclusions, they make our task more difficult. Using history to teach morality is usually a dubious exercise.

For both good and bad reasons, the United States has always resisted the Machiavellian argument that governments should divorce morality from politics. Our political culture is not Bismarckian, but one where moral and religious conscience

THOMAS LECKEY *teaches history at St. Anselm's Abbey School in Washington, D.C.*

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Leonard A. Temme

The Value of Zero

After dinner,
Chris, my younger son
factors polynomials for math homework;
he groups the common terms
arranges the expression to a familiar pattern
and finds the factors.
My older son, James, on the couch, reads
Lady Chatterley's Lover
assigned for high school English
and I wonder why.
The radiator hisses warmth
to the tenth floor Manhattan apartment
as the wind blows rain against the window
rattling white porcelain bells
hung against it, on the inside.

Chris takes a break to water the plants
and, with the thunderstorm outside,
he tells me that he raised the avocado from a pit
and—Do you see this splint?—it had been caught
in the window, once, when he closed it,
but that was long ago, and it seems OK now.
He says he keeps the dead leaves in the pot
because he thinks they still have nutrients in them
and kisses a leaf when he says he loves this plant.
The aloe plant he loves also, he says,
because he raised it from a cutting and
now it's grown and has its own pot.

The thunderstorm and traffic sounds mix
and I remember the boy I saw on the subway
sitting on the floor, his back against the pole:
"I'm twenty-one years old and I'm dying of AIDS,"
he said, before the subway sounds drowned his voice.
When the train stopped, he passed in front of me,
walking slowly, with difficulty and I saw his dirty skin
with lesions and signs of neuropathy.
He didn't ask for anything but said again:
"I'm twenty-one years old and I'm dying of AIDS."

Chris asks why factor polynomials at all.
I say it is to find the value of the coefficient:
Set the expression equal to zero
and find the conditions necessary
to make this equation correct.
James looks up from *Chatterley* and says:
"Well, that makes nothing correct."
Chris smiles and I marvel again
at the power of zero
to reveal the value of the co-
efficient of an expression.

served as a political agent. Even before reaching the New World, John Winthrop, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, instructed his Puritan congregation to be "as a shining city upon a hill," a religious bastion initially, but also an enclave with a beacon. The ideal remained powerfully fixed in the American mind, nursed along by heroes like Abraham Lincoln ("last, best hope of earth") and Woodrow Wilson in his policy of neutrality pursued from "Olympian heights." Even Ronald Reagan employed the "shining city" metaphor (though not its spirit) in his 1984 acceptance speech at the Republican convention. In 1630, Winthrop warned gravely that "the eyes of the world are upon us," a responsibility echoed by George Bush in his 1991 State of the Union address.

Few nations even bother to measure their conduct against such daunting moral standards. America's attitude in this respect is something to be proud of. But there are obvious dangers. Cloaked in morality, our actions often seem unimpeachable—at least to us. All too often, however, our moral language allows us to hide our real motives and ignore the actual facts at issue. By sounding highly subjective moral themes, presidents and moviemakers convey a great deal of subliminal information. History students, however, would do better divorcing, at least momentarily, issues of morality from their study of the past. In comparing Saddam Hussein to Hitler, for example, Bush assumed that Americans remember Hitler in moral terms far more accurately than they remember him in historical ones, and that most don't care to disentangle the two.

Students must learn to differentiate among historical contexts. For example, if we accept the Hitler analogy, the inescapable moral judgment surrounding Hitler doesn't hold up when applied to Hussein and the Gulf war. Dispassionate analysis shows that the United States had expressed national interest in Europe before World War II; that Americans owed a great deal of their history and culture to Germany and England, the two principal combatants in 1941; and that defeating Hitler offered tangible economic and diplomatic rewards. In the Middle East, on the contrary, our national interests have never been fully defined; Arab and American culture seem starkly different; and we say we are not seeking rewards for our efforts. Moreover, in diplomatic terms the president's policy may have suffered diminishing returns from the Hitler analogy: since one can't very well negotiate with the morally reprehensible, the president may not have been able to respond freely to diplomatic initiatives.

A.J.P. Taylor, perhaps the most distinguished historian of modern Europe, was criticized severely for arguing that Hitler's rise to power did not oblige historians to couch their analysis in moral terms. In doing so, Taylor began to rescue another historical event—the so-called appeasement—from the closet of disrepute. Our popular history tells us repeatedly that appeasement was cowardly, that it failed, even that it was morally reprehensible. Small wonder that the president can cash in handsomely with a few easy references to this ignoble past.

Students who begin to study World War II with the precon-

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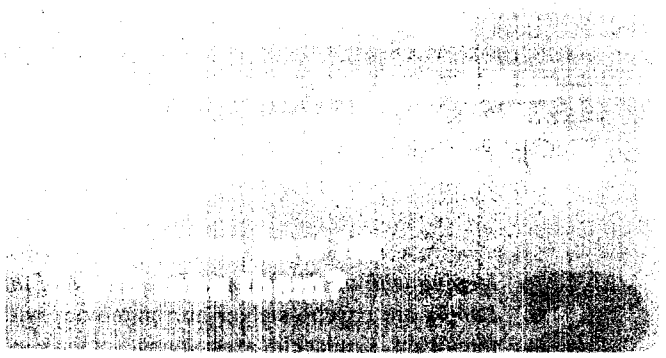
ceived notion that appeasement was wrong, or that it was doomed to failure, or that it exacerbated conditions during the war (which inevitably followed) will miss fundamental historical points. We have to start with the idea that reasonably intelligent men adopted the policy because they thought it balanced interests at an extraordinarily complicated moment in history. In doing this, we may not judge English Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's tolerance of German aggression against Czechoslovakia any more kindly, though we may appreciate him better. If we fault the appeasers for anything, we may fault them for being too moral, for thinking that England, France, and the Czechs might be served by a compromised peace, or for miscalculating the grip that Machiavellian logic had on Hitler and others. Taylor's assessment of the moral issues involved in 1938 is both reasoned and dignified:

> In 1938 Czechoslovakia was betrayed. In 1939 Poland was saved. Less than one hundred thousand Czechs died during the war. Six-and-a-half million Poles were killed. Which was better—to be a betrayed Czech or a saved Pole? I am glad that Germany was defeated and Hitler destroyed. I also appreciate that others paid the price for this, and I recognize the honesty of those who thought the price too high (*The Origins of the Second World War*).

Similarly, when we look at our own history, the centuries-long cultural collision between European settlers and Native Americans seems to lend itself far more easily to moral judgment than to careful historical analysis. In the nineteenth century Americans conceived of the winning of the West as a battle against "savages"; now, we tend to think nearly the opposite, and consider the treatment of the Indians an example of racial genocide. Both views are oversimplifications.

Costner's *Dances with Wolves* gives us a beautiful, moving example of the latest trend in popular history, revision as therapy, or history as psychoanalysis. In *Dances with Wolves* the villain is none other than us, and this moral revelation is supposed to improve us by shocking us with the depravity of our slaughter of Native Americans. Raising our consciousness about the fate of Native Americans at the hands of the U.S. government is a good and necessary thing. But we need to go beyond consciousness raising if we are really to understand the forces at work in legitimizing the wars against the Indians. The twenty-five years following Appomattox and the end of the Civil War saw the culmination of a tragic struggle between Native and white Americans that began centuries earlier. True, disease wiped out many more Indians than guns did. But ideology—notions of manifest destiny and democratic progress—was the weapon that dictated Indian culture would finally perish.

In this light, Costner did well from an historical perspective to open his film with a Civil War scene before moving on to the frontier. That helps put the moral ironies in proper context. Slavery was destroyed because it undercut an emerging national, economic, and political consensus regarding the value of free labor and equality of opportunity with all its consequent implications for private property and majoritarian rule. Racial equality was not the goal of the Union in the Civil War. Ironically, the preservation of the Union by war—which necessitated the elim-



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ination of slavery—helped to legitimize the destruction of Native American culture. Both slavery and Native American culture were sacrificed on the same altar of democratic and material progress. That ideology allowed us to ignore the legitimate claims of the Indians—to dehumanize them—as a people whose resistance to American "values" was self-evident proof of their savagery.

Costner's Sioux hold their property in common, live as nomads in a tribal structure, practice patriarchy, revere their elders, worship different gods, and otherwise contradict Anglo-American culture in dozens of ways. Moral assumptions about how "civilized Christians" should live blinded Americans to the humanity of Native Americans, and help explain the ferocity with which Indian society was destroyed. Have similar moral assumptions about "aggression" and the supposed Arab "lack of respect for life" clouded our judgment about Iraq? Has it made it easier for us to justify the deaths of possibly sixty thousand Iraqi soldiers? Could the stark moral alternatives—appeasement or democratic victory—offered by Bush really describe the facts of life and politics in the Persian Gulf?

None of this suggests that we should teach in a moral vacuum, acquitting ourselves of moral responsibility as individuals. Nor is it an apology for Saddam Hussein—who is no shrinking violet himself when it comes to simplifying history. But it is an urge to caution and to a respect for complexity. The strength of moral judgments probably increases, in fact, with dispassionate objectivity. History is full of object lessons in morality, but their force comes from the integrity of the discipline: if the story is told accurately, carefully, and responsibly, the moral conclusions emerge with ease. Like most lessons, the best historical judgments are those that are discovered rather than dictated. □

SCREEN

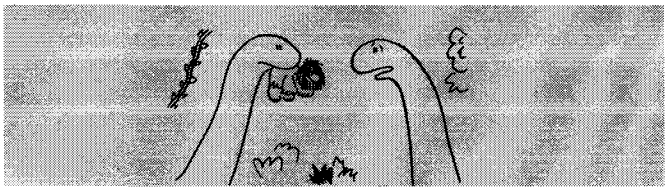
WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

'SILENCE' & 'SLEEPING'

Sleeping with the Enemy and *The Silence of the Lambs* are psycho-stalker-horror movies with remarkably similar climaxes: young women moving through large, dark houses while being stalked by lunatic males. Both films are well acted and expertly made. I doubt if I will forget either for a long time. But, in the case of *The Silence of the Lambs,* I will certainly try my best to do so.

The serial murderer of *Lambs* is stalking large young women for their hides. He is having sexual identity problems (to put it mildly) and is trying to construct a new body for himself out of the skins of his victims. I think I've got that right, but I'm not sure because the script rattles off psychological analysis and police procedure at lightning speed in order to cram as much visceral horror as possible into two-hours running time.

Lambs features two monsters: the aforesaid transvestite (transcarnite?), whose pursuit by the FBI heroine, Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster) provides the film's main plot but which is treated cavalierly by the scriptwriter; and the psychotic but brilliant psychiatrist, Dr. Hannibal "the Cannibal" Lecter, whose analysis of the serial murders Agent Starling must solicit before she can crack the case. These interviews between plucky heroine and evil genius are the real core of the movie. There's no profound psychological revelation in the dialogue but the staging, with Lecter's reflected face (on the glass barrier of his asylum cell) superimposed on Starling's, makes you feel that there hasn't been such a diabolic/human confrontation since Mephisto strolled into Faust's study.



"ANOTHER *fad diet?*"

And these interviews contain the seeds of serious, gripping drama. As in the play, *Equus*, interviewee only surrenders information when interviewer does. As Starling probes Lecter for clues, Lecter probes Starling for the roots of her need to save people. When Clarice recalls the crystallizing episode of her childhood—a vision of lambs being led to slaughter on a ranch—Lecter psychologically feasts on the image as luxuriously as he has feasted on the flesh of his victims. And he thanks her for it. At this moment, the viewer has a glimpse of good and evil eternally staring at each other across an impassable force field that lifts this movie above the common run of melodrama.

But only for a moment. Soon Lecter escapes and starts eliminating with gleeful ease anyone who gets in his way. It's really an unequal contest: what can an entire metropolitan police force do against a man who can open top-of-the-line handcuffs in ten seconds with a pen, who can fake a coma by slowing down his heartbeat, who can pause in the slaughter of two guards to savor a few bars from Glenn Gould's recording of *The Goldberg Variations*, who can not only identify the scent a woman has on with a single sniff but with a second sniff can identify the perfume she used several days ago, who can...who can, for all I know, leap tall buildings with a single bound and shift continental land masses with just a little hard thinking? Dr. Lecter, in short, is Superman, and Superman is no more believable when he's evil than when he is virtuous.

Anthony Hopkins does a virtuoso turn as Lecter. In his first interview with Starling, he stands motionless in his cell, his body as poised and potent as that of a *danseur nobel*. The actor's force and stylizations suspend our disbelief even when the plot leaves us gaping. This evil Houdini, this malefic Punch, is launched into a story that is supposed to be as grimly serious and as compellingly veristic as an old "Dragnet" episode. But Hopkins-Lecter overpowers the movie. Skulls get shattered, noses get bitten off, blood splatters plates of food, a whole ambulance of medics gets slaughtered. Who cares about the original criminal Starling was supposed to catch now that Lecter is loose?

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"Dragnet" has turned into *Alien* or *Predator* or *The Exorcist*. And director Jonathan Demme has turned into William Friedkin or Ken Russel. I have always valued Demme's films (*Something Wild, Melvin and Howard*) for their spontaneity and looseness. Now he has made a movie that is more like a traffic accident than an entertainment. It ties knots in our stomachs and then ties knots in the knots. I suppose I should admire Demme's versatility, but how can I applaud when a vital artist turns into an efficient ghoul?

In *Sleeping with the Enemy*, knots are tied in order to be cut. The horror mounts until it bursts and catharsis is achieved. The film plays fair with its characters and with us. The villain here is a monster, but not an unmotivated killing machine. He is possessed by an emotion almost all of us have felt at some time: possessive love. But he feels it to the point where any sign of spontaneity on the part of his beloved wife—a casual glance at a stranger, a bit of sloppy housekeeping—becomes an affront to his sense of possession. His idea of love is to turn the loved one into a component of himself. And when that component malfunctions, he must snap it into place.

There is nothing in *Silence of the Lambs* as terrifying as the first fifteen minutes of *Sleeping with the Enemy*. Yet, for most of that quarter of an hour we see nothing more than the portrait of a seemingly happy marriage. Julia Roberts walks idyllically along a Cape Cod beach collecting clamshells. Her husband (Patrick Bergin), dressed for the office, comes up and embraces her. Her sandy hands dirty his suit. She seems suddenly tremulous but he regards the mess affably and goes off to change. Yet she still seems slightly shaken. Something unpleasant stirs in us despite the loveliness of the morning sky. The couple dress for an important cocktail party, and he notes with mild disappointment that she isn't wearing the red dress he likes so much. Julia blithely counters that the red dress may be too skimpy for this cold weather. Cut to the cocktail party. She's wearing the red dress. He looks across a crowded room at her, his eyes brimming with love. And, sure enough, that night they make love passionately.

But why does she look at him so uncertainly the next morning when he does his calisthenics? Is it because his exertions make him breathe as furiously as an engine? After washing up, he notices that the bathroom towels are not hanging in alignment on the towel rack. He points this out to her; she straightens the towels. She thanks him for the correction. Then she opens a cupboard and puts all the cans inside into orderly little groups. She seems to be doing this in a state of near-panic. Outside, her husband chats with a fellow yachtsman who is joining them for an outing. The yachtsman remarks that he's often passed by the house, has once noticed the wife at a window, and considers Bergin quite a lucky man. For owning such a great house, that is. Bergin smilingly agrees, politely excuses himself, enters the house, punches Roberts to the floor, and kicks her in the stomach. That night, he brings her an expensive present. He is a very happy man. He knows his wife and her little needs so well.

None of the rest of the movie—Roberts's escape from this marital nightmare, Bergin's pursuit of her, Roberts's discovery of true love with a young drama teacher, and the final showdown between husband and wife—achieves the power of that first quarter of an hour. But nothing shakes our interest in the story or characters, either. Joseph Ruben is not a relentless director. He doesn't pound us with scary music, end every scene on a sinister note, photograph his actors to look like escapees from a Diane Arbus exhibit (though he does include one shot of Bergin drinking from a water fountain that makes him look like a predatory fish). The world of *Sleeping with the Enemy* includes small-town idyllicism, sweet love scenes, moments of tenderness between a mother and daughter. So, when violence breaks out in this very human world, it is more shocking than anything in the sweaty freak-show landscape of *Silence of the Lambs*.

In a review of William Burroughs's *Naked Lunch*, Norman Mailer put his finger on that novel's central flaw: After reading three hundred pages of surrealistic atrocities, the reader begins to wonder if there will be purple blood in the next rape. That is now the problem with nearly all horror-suspense films. Each new work must up the ante of brutality. Then along comes a movie like *Sleeping with the Enemy* which has only three brief moments of conventional violence but which keeps viewers riveted throughout its running time. Once a filmmaker achieves a certain amount of reality, there's no need to reach for the tube of purple blood. A splash of the usual red will do very nicely.

RICHARD ALLEVA

Mary Rudbeck Stanko

Rhonchus Rogue

My head rests in a bowl of pillows
like pink meat
portioned and prepared for a meal
while my partner's sleep
becomes a soliloquy of sounds which
tear & chew & digest
the beefy side of dreams.
I did not ever want to recline
in madness, sinking into the trough
of slumber
only to be inhaled and masticated
like some insomnial stew;
but here I am,
overdone and emaciated, hanging on
to the uvala of night,
waiting to be expelled into the sweet
breath of morning
when the throat clears
and teeth doze again in their smiles.

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STAGE

RUSSIAN LIVES

'MY BIG LAND' & 'THREE SISTERS'

The Oleg Tabakov Moscow Theatre-Studio is currently touring the United States under the auspices of the Acting Company—which last year took a program of Tennessee Williams one-acters to Russia—in a production of Aleksandr Galich's *My Big Land*. The play was scheduled for production in 1957 and had already reached dress rehearsal, when the production was closed, the play banned. It is difficult to understand at this distance what the authorities could have found dangerous in *My Big Land* in the year of the Sputnik, the year following Khrushchev's celebrated deconstruction of Stalin when the USSR was presumably on the edge of one of its open phases. It is "a play about the discovery and meaning of homeland," Tabakov says in a program note. "The message is not that you can't go home again, rather it is that you must." Since the homeland emphasized in the play is one's village, one's neighborhood, one's street, it may have been that the central government (Union of...notwithstanding) found Galich's conception of the big land visible through the small inappropriate. But since 1957 was also the year of a new attempt at economic decentralization, such a reading may be a touch too ingenious. It may have been nothing more than the art bureaucracy's distaste for Galich, as the program suggests, for the playwright went into exile shortly afterwards; he died in Paris in 1977.

My Big Land, which I saw at the Annenberg Center at the University of Pennsylvania, is played in Russian with simultaneous translation. Directed by Tabakov in a set by Aleksandr Borovsky, it is a somewhat static play, made more so by the line of boxlike playing areas that allow the audience to see more than one action at a time but that trap the performers in too tight a stage space. Hovering above the boxes is an abstract gathering of floral arrangements and music stands (the protagonist is a violinist) which, even suffused with light after the hero's death, never gains more than a decorative significance. Although the play is divided into three acts, each set in a different period, it is performed without intermission, implying a dramatic build that is not really there. The first act, set in 1929 in Tulchin, a small town in the Ukraine, introduces David Schwartz, a reluctant teen-age violinist, kept at his practice by his coarse and sometimes brutal father when he would prefer to be romping with the girls. We next see him at the Moscow Conservatory in 1937, a tediously self-involved young man, already making a name for himself and appalled when his father arrives, full of enthusiasm and with a gift of Tulchin prunes, and embarrasses him with an intrusion of the life he thinks he has escaped. In the last act, on a medical train in 1944, David is a dying officer who is visited by his dead father—killed when the invading Nazis destroyed

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the Jews of Tulchin. There is a great deal of generalized chat in this scene, some of it related to the homeland theme. But the heart of the act is two monologues, one by the dead man, who describes what happened to him, and the other by the son. The latter tells how his unit arrived in Tulchin too late to save the Jews and how he was wounded as he sat in his old street realizing his attachment to the place and to the father whom he had insufficiently appreciated.

There is a subplot in which David dotes on the unworthy but upwardly mobile Tanya while two other women—representatives of all that is simplistically best in Soviet life—hopelessly love the unlovable boy wonder, thus allowing a thematic parallel to the father's devotion to his ungrateful son. The father is made up and played as a Jewish caricature until his monologue that imbues him with the great dignity that was presumably always there had his son had the loving eyes to see it. It is good that cultural exchange gives American audiences a chance to see this young company, but a more complex, less dated vehicle might have given a better idea of its capabilities.

The Atlantic Theater Company is another young company presenting a Russian play, albeit an older one. Formed in 1985 by former students of David Mamet and W.H. Macy, the Atlantic is dedicated to Mamet's belief that performances should serve the playwright's vision and not a superimposition from a designer director. The play is Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, in Mamet's adaptation, directed by Macy. Mamet, who sees himself rescuing Chekhov from inadequate translators, has already done a version of *The Cherry Orchard* and *Uncle Vanya* (both published by Grove). Shortly before I saw *Three Sisters*, I examined Mamet's version of *Vanya* alongside that of Ann Dunnigan, whose New American Library collection seems to me the best American Chekhov, and I could see no compelling reason for Mamet's version beyond his obvious and highly justified admiration for the Russian playwright. Although there is some variation in word choices, there are no major differences between the two translations—no manipulation of scenes or characters for non-Chekhovian effect—and Dunnigan's lines seem to me generally more vigorous, more direct, less odd in locution. Seeing *Three Sisters*—hearing it, rather—I reacted as I had when I read *Vanya*, surprised that a playwright who is a master of language in his own idiom should have produced so routine an adaptation.

The production, which I also saw at the Annenberg, presented by the Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays (taking liberties with its titular mission), was a serviceable one. Some performances were more interesting that others—particularly Todd Weeks's insistently eager Tuzenbach—but for the most part it was a production that emphasized the ensemble—Chekhov's and the company's—and, as the Mamet doctrine says it should, served the playwright to the best of its abilities. It may not have been as exciting or as revelatory as Chekhov can be, but I have seen less acceptable Chekhov under grander auspices.

GERALD WEALES

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Random House, $16.95, 169 pp.

Francis Flaherty

After decades of decrying the growth of government, William F. Buckley, Jr., is now proposing a big-government idea. A BIG big-government idea: A program of national service in which hordes of American youth, spurred on by state-imposed sanctions and inducements, will spend a year caring for the aged, cleaning parks, conducting voter-registration drives, microfilming crumbling library books, and so on.

But don't cancel your *National Review*; Buckley has hardly become a running-dog redistributionist. For one thing, cleaner parks and comforted senior citizens are not the "governing justifications" for his suggestion. "It is fine, splendid in fact, that national service can anticipate solid good done to other human beings," he allows. But his main aim, he says, is to sensitize citizens to the debt they owe their "patrimony" and thus to foster in them the public spirit that democracy demands.

Only a true conservative would strenuously insist that, honest, he does not really *mean* to help the poor. But while Buckley's political colors come through in this and several other ways, he has produced in *Gratitude*, his twenty-ninth book, an evocative, engaging work on an important subject.

National service is a venerable notion, championed by George Washington, William James, and others. The subject sparked great debate during the Vietnam years, and it is now the focus of congressional bills from both sides of the aisle. While Iraq and recession will keep national service off Washington's short list for a bit, many believe with Buckley that the issue is "coming very slowly to a boil."

But it is a complicated stew: National service raises profound questions. The military draft aside, should the state be able to compel or induce young people to serve civilian needs? Is Milton Friedman right that national service bears an "uncanny resemblance" to the Hitler Youth Corps? Does nonmilitary national service violate the Thirteenth Amendment prohibition of involuntary servitude? Does it endanger our unions? Who will pay the billions required?

The promise, though, is as great as the peril. Every voter knows the ennobling feeling that even modest national service bestows; imagine what a major national-service program might do. Moreover, to "rouse the civic sense" through national service, Buckley says, will greatly fortify our system of self-government. Also—despite Buckley's wariness about this point—national service can be a great boon in addressing our social problems. And as for worries about the accretion of power to the state, national-service advocates simply point to compulsory-education laws. Far from being an unprecedented opportunity for brainwashing youth, national service is just one more year of schooling, they say—like a junior year abroad.

Complete with his signature sesquipedalian silliness (my favorite: Stakhanovites), Buckley ably discusses these and other national-service issues. He offers us Alexander Hamilton and Adam Smith for the proposition that the state may instill in its citizens those virtues needed for its preservation. He cites polls confirming that nearly three-quarters of Americans like the idea of national service (though far fewer want to foot the bill). He tallies the millions of jobs, from Big Brother to snow-removal worker, that are available and suitable for national service.

He also dissects the military draft, Peace Corps, VISTA, Guardian Angels, and other examples of national-service programs—public and private, compulsory and voluntary. He describes lesser-known programs too, such as Atlanta's rule that public high school students must perform some community work in order to graduate. And he takes us to Switzerland to show how national service—in particular, universal military service—brings coherence to a heterogeneous country of twenty-six relatively independent cantons and several major languages.

Inevitably, though, any national-service advocate must get down to brass tacks. Specifically, what is the program to be? Voluntary or compulsory? Who will run it? How will it be financed? How long is the term of service? What activities are eligible?

Buckley dubs his preferred model the Service Franchise. It is voluntary, but he recommends using a variety of powerful "sanctions and inducements" to spur widespread participation by the three million Americans who turn eighteen each year. One major inducement is the basic year's pay: $10,000 in tax credits, to be "spent" on the participant's future tax returns. One major sanction is the denial of federal educational aid to nonparticipants.

Without selecting specific ones, Buckley also provides an inventive list of other possible spurs to serve. They include denying driver's licenses, high school diplomas, Social Security payments, or tax deductions to nonparticipants, and granting those who have served certain privileges for governmental benefits. Such mechanisms are hardly revolutionary, Buckley says; witness, for example, the GI Bill.

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A federal agency will supervise the Service Franchise. But each state, if its voters choose to participate, will handle within broad federal guidelines most of the financing and operation, including setting appropriate sanctions, deciding which activities are eligible for national service, etc.

Buckley's goal is great: 80 percent participation, by Americans born after 1973, by the year 2000. Great too is the cost: Assuming half of those eligible sign up, the annual expense would be $16 billion. But Buckley says the returns are worth it. (Shame on you, Bill! Spend, spend, spend!)

The Service Franchise model is thoughtful and substantial. It also exhibits its creator's political predilections.

For instance, there is real risk that the voluntary nature of the scheme will make it a poor kid's program. Buckley is creative in crafting carrots and sticks for his plan, but most of them deal with dollars. Why should a rich kid want to spend a year earning a measly few thousand dollars in tax credits and pin money? The problem is not theoretical: the volunteer army is more poor and more black than the nation on average—and has been sharply criticized for it.

Buckley replies that rich kids are not impervious to the denial of driver's licenses and diplomas. But these Draconian measures, in a putatively voluntary system, will likely be politically unpalatable. This raises the question of compulsory national service, which on its face seems more egalitarian than a voluntary one. But Buckley gives short shrift to the compulsory model.

Buckley's blinders about the poor are also bothersome. Through national service, he says, citizens can "requite to the land that nurtured them a measure of the profit they take" therefrom. I wouldn't try this line on the homeless guy I see at my subway station many mornings. Some people, often due to the happenstance of birth, have profited much more from our land than others. Despite Buckley's revulsion for redistribution, perhaps in the best national-service system the fortunate would pay their debt to society by paying society's debt to the less fortunate. □

AN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STORY

CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION, THEOLOGY, AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM
Charles E. Curran
Notre Dame University Press, $27.95, 257 pp.

Raymond A. Schroth

At our university we have devised a variety of strategies—some silly, some sublime—to allow for freedom but still protect our Catholic identity. We weight the board of trustees with a majority of Jesuits, require controversial speakers who might attack the church to be paired with a speaker from the "other side," impose a rigid core curriculum, offer the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius to the staff during Lent, and plant eight trees to honor the Jesuit and laywomen martyrs in El Salvador.

The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., whose own faculty handbook describes it as a "national center for Catholic culture," which "accepts the standards and procedures of American institutions," in a community "faithful to its own national traditions," has affirmed its identity and definition of freedom by expelling its best known and most widely respected moral theologian.

The story of the Rev. Charles Curran's 1986 removal, at the Vatican's order, from the CU theology faculty for his "liberal" but widely held views on sexual morality and of his losing fight for reinstatement—ending only recently with his appointment to the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University—is one of the great stories in American Catholic history.

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Emerson or Thoreau—whose straightforward devotion to the truth animates his vision. Yet it is profoundly Catholic—in the spirit of John Courtney Murray and John Tracy Ellis—in that Curran asks and answers his questions while committed to a believing community.

Alas, the modest Curran is only occasionally a great storyteller. He is more often the theological woodsman: he chops down all the trees in the forest (reads all the books and articles) and stacks them up into a cabin (his judicious conclusions). But what an admirable, sturdy cabin he has built!

His cabin on the theological frontier is a lifetime of teaching and research—twenty-five books written or edited—plus the example of his witness when his teaching has brought him into conflict with Rome. The just-added chimney to the cabin, *Catholic Higher Education, Theology, and Academic Freedom,* is three things: a history of the idea of academic freedom in both secular and Catholic universities, a defense of the idea of academic freedom, and an account of Curran's own battle not just to keep his job but to demonstrate that Catholic commitment and freedom of inquiry can coexist on the same campus.

The turning point in the history of American Catholic higher education was the famous 1967 Land O'Lakes Statement, in which twenty-six university leaders, with Notre Dame's Father Theodore Hesburgh in the front line, declared that "the Catholic university today must be a university in the full modern sense of the word."

In practice this came to mean a shift from the predominantly pastoral to an academic emphasis—the full professionalization (Ph.D.s from state and Ivy League schools, scholarly publications, etc.) of the faculty, curriculum changes in order to become eligible for state funding, and "academic freedom in the face of authority of whatever kind." In schools that could not manage the balancing act between tradition and modernity, it meant secularization of the spirit, a loss of institutional identity.

Before the 1960s, Catholic educators—moved less by religious considerations than by Catholic philosophy's opposition to Cartesianism and Kantianism which freed the modern mind from external authority and from " objective reality"—fought liberalism, secularism, communism, intellectualism, and academic freedom in the same breath.

In 1938, Fordham's George Bull, S.J., who believed there was a Catholic way for doing everything, argued against a graduate school emphasis on research. In his 1949 inaugural address, Georgetown president Hunter Guthrie, S.J., blamed secular universities and their academic freedom for the depersonalization of modern humanity. A charwoman of the thirteenth century, he said, knew more about the meaning of life than Plato. Even *America* editor Robert C. Hartnett, S.J., who would soon lose his job for standing up against the abuses of red-hunting Wisconsin Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, wrote scathing attacks on liberal educators who failed to ferret out campus Communists. The Catholic establishment's main theme: freedom must always be limited by the truth.

Meanwhile, this alleged primacy of the "spiritual" often deprived faculty members at Catholic universities, both lay and clerical, of the due process and academic freedom

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protections their secular counterparts enjoyed, thanks to the American Association of University Professors. Thus, Father Hope at St. Jude's College might find himself transferred to the missions after a disagreement with Father Rector, and Professor Sturdley at Saint Swithin's might be out in the street after fifteen years because he writes a torrid novel and marries a teenage student outside the church.

The great change of the late 1960s came about through Vatican II's acceptance of what Bernard Lonergan, S.J., called the shift from classicism to historical consciousness—the realization that each age must understand God's self-revelation in the light of contemporary realities. Furthermore, as the twentieth-century enemy became totalitarianism rather than individualistic liberalism, the church gained a new appreciation for the values of freedom and individual human rights. Catholic intellectuals had always taught that faith and reason were complementary rather than opposed, but they had lacked the academic climate to push that principle to its logical conclusions. Now they had it. Or some of them did.

The Empire struck back in *Sapientia Christiana,* promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1979, and in Canon 812 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law that requires a "mandate" from ecclesiastical authority to teach theological subjects at any "institute of higher studies."

The heart of Curran's argument is that theology is a legitimate university discipline wherein the theologian is answerable only to scholarly peers; and those peers must make the judgment on the basis of *methodology* rather than on orthodoxy. Thus—although in 1988 Curran held that a Catholic theologian had to believe in Jesus—he says now that "a Protestant or an atheist could be a Catholic theologian."

Regardless of the risks of freedom, Curran maintains, the theologian, whose teaching authority is parallel to rather than derived from that of the hierarchy, can serve the church properly only through *creative* fidelity, one which bears witness to both the harmony of faith and reason and the freedom of the act of faith.

Curran, who came to CU from Rochester in 1965, survived two attempts to remove him, in 1967 and 1968. In both battles, the faculty and the larger Catholic intellectual community rallied to his defense, and CU, under pressure, redid its statutes and bylaws to conform to the Land O'Lakes idea.

In a sense, the committee hearings and court case of 1986-88 were a continuation of the 1967 conflict; the reformers thought they had won, but Curran's enemies in

REVIEWERS

FRANCIS FLAHERTY *is a New York-based writer specializing in legal issues.*

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., *is a journalism professor at Loyola University of New Orleans.*

DANIEL M. MURTAUGH *is a director of the Commonweal Foundation and assistant treasurer of W.R. Grace & Co.*

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Washington and Rome had bided their time and, by removing his "canonical mission," without a substantive peer-evaluation of his ideas, reduced a profound theoretical debate about the limits of freedom to a case of contract law: in effect, if CU's charter gives the pope a veto on theology professors, you lose.

In his autobiography, *God, Country, Notre Dame*, Father Hesburgh says that a cardinal or CU's president should have simply stood up and said that in this case academic freedom is more important than orthodoxy. They wouldn't say it. The disputants played with compromises; but Curran would accept no compromise that allowed an outside authority to limit a theologian's freedom.

It is a sad irony that his hard-fought case ended up proving what he had fought to disprove: that at a leading Catholic university a scholar really is not free. □

PRIVATE GARDENS, PUBLIC DUMPS

BEYOND THE BOOM
New Voices on American Life, Culture & Politics
Terry Teachout, Ed.
Poseidon Press, $18.95

Daniel M. Murtaugh

This is a collection of essays by a group of baby boomers who meet regularly to share beer, pretzels, and ideas in a borrowed townhouse in New York. They are bright and articulate. They doubt that they can be summed up by any generalization, but none of them can entirely resist trying to do so anyhow. When I disagree with them, I imagine, with some relish, an argument from which I could expect to learn a great deal. There is much here that is encouraging and much that is oddly disheartening.

Let me locate them and myself chronologically. The baby boomers, born in the fifties and sixties, can be divided into early boomers, whose males were draft-eligible in the Vietnam war, and late boomers who were new voters during the Carter administration. The authors in this collection are late boomers. I come from the far side of the boom, having graduated from college six months before John Kennedy was assassinated, a fault line in my life that these essayists know mainly as written history.

I feel a little young to be the father of any of them, but history shifted into passing gear in the sixties, leaving some discontinuities between my experience and theirs which seem almost generational. It is good for someone like me to be reminded of this. For example, when many of these baby boomers were in high school and college, the bullies and enforcers of unreflective conformity were antiwar and black power activists. Furthermore, the bullies often formed alliances with the teachers, some of whom were brought into the classroom by the availability of 2-A draft deferments. The best and brightest children have always defined themselves against the bullies and conformists, and so it is not hard to understand why many of this generation joined the Reagan revolution. I have nothing remotely like this in my experience.

My difficulty with the analysis of this experience in many of these essays is that the bullying and the conformity are defined as *politics*. As a consequence, many of these appealing twenty-five- to thirty-five-year olds define their life since college as "a farewell to politics" (the title of Terry Teachout's closing essay). This also fed into the Reagan revolution, as several of the writers acknowledge, but without the regret that I feel. Reagan ran for president but against government. He brought to a compelling focus forces that, for a time at least, subverted the notion of politics as a calling to public service. That notion is almost entirely absent from this book. That is the disheartening part.

This impoverished notion of politics finds its sourest expression in "Portrait of a Washington Policy Wog" by David Brooks, a genuinely repellent and insecurely ironic portrait of a mid-level cabinet officer. Contempt taints everything in the Policy Wog's life—his work, his colleagues, the senators with whom he dines at testimonial banquets, the doltish PACmen who pick up the tab, his home address, the pictures on his wall, and most of all himself. We are given no alternative vision of the art of government against which this cankered order can be measured and found wanting. Numbing, self-loathing careerism, we conclude, is as as good as politics can be.

Given this sorry definition of the public order, what better course is there than to turn like Candide and Cunegonde to the tending of private gardens? Several of the most appealing essays have to do with the struggle to maintain private gardens in a modern urban environment. Maggie Gallagher makes a serious point with admirable good humor about the supposed affluence of her generation. Except for the odd investment banker among them (who may have taken a header since this book came out), most late boomers' high-sounding salaries are a smaller percentage of the cost of any dwelling that they might aspire to own than their parents' salaries were. And so they don't own. Instead, they dream in cramped rented apartments of the lost Edens of their middle-class childhoods, of roomy houses shaded by maternal elms and carried by a single paycheck. Susan Vigilante writes with arresting earnestness of the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, a rediscovered guide out of the varied addictions of the

"Straighten your tie, Stephen. The world is already filled with enough disorder."

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eighties into a rudimentary form of religious enlightenment. George Sim Johnston analyzes the emptiness where religion used to be in the lives of yuppies and says some very shrewd things about the fuzz with which they try to fill it in. John Podhoretz and Bruce Bawer take movies as their point of departure, but their true subject is childhood and adulthood, specifically, how popular culture encourages us to prolong childhood and evade the responsibilities of child rearing. Donna Rifkind and Roger Kimball document the decline of moral seriousness and the rise of political-cultural faddism in literature and scholarship.

The two best essays are those of Teachout and Richard Vigilante. Vigilante describes "The War Against the Yuppies," in which the opening shot is the insistence of popular culture that such a creature actually exists. Having created this straw man the media attack him and, more insidiously, cater to him, especially in the spate of nervously trendy magazines (*W, Details, Vanity Fair, Spy*) that began to jostle for attention and brandy ads in the eighties. Vigilante's logic sometimes wobbles, as when he argues almost in one breath that yuppies are mythical and that the strongest criticism of them comes from within their own ranks, but his defense of bourgeois values, frankly acknowledged and persuasively defined, is heartfelt and stirring.

Terry Teachout's "A Farewell to Politics," already referred to, is the most detailed and intellectually compelling exposition of the (to me) disheartening theme announced in its title and variously expressed throughout the book. Taking his own experience in college and after as part of his evidence, he argues that the energies that were invested in the movement politics of the Left and the Right will shift in the nineties from politics to culture. The new ideological battle lines will be drawn in the arts, in scholarship, and in the domestic arrangements of our lives. Content to leave "politics to the professionals," conservatives like Teachout will "return to debating first causes, the proper role of any intellectual movement, be it of the Left or of the Right." But something stirs in the embers. Teachout concedes that "*local* politics, the nuts-and-bolts kind, has begun to engage my interest, a sure sign of advancing age." Stay tuned.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 210)

ing book that raises theological and human issues which must be confronted."

MARC H. ELLIS

Wrong reviewer

Evanston, Ill.

To the Editors: Leonard Fein's review of Marc Ellis's book is more than disappointing. It is a major disservice to *Commonweal* readers. Fein's strategy is to present Ellis's views in an exaggerated way, taken out of context, and then argue that Ellis represents an extremist position. The basic message is that Ellis should be written off as a self-hating Jew who desires the destruction of the state of Israel.

This is hardly what the book is about. On the contrary, what Ellis is arguing is the opposite, that it is precisely the violent polarities of innocent victimization and total redemption within which the present realities of Israel are considered that prevents the acceptance of ordinary human moral responsibility for serious injustices toward the Palestinians.

By choosing such a reviewer the *Commonweal* editors have prevented this book from getting a fair hearing. Let us hope that your readers will recognize that where there is so much heat there may also be some light and decide to read the book.

ROSEMARY RADFORD RUETHER

Disallowing dissent

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: In his recent review, "Thanks, but No Thanks" [January 25], Leonard Fein unwittingly validates a major thesis of Marc Ellis's book, *Beyond Innocence and Redemption*. Namely, some Jews are allowed into the debate but others who are *said* to cross a certain line ought to be excluded. As far as Fein is concerned, Ellis doesn't warrant a place in the debate about Israel, Palestine, and the United States—exactly the fate experienced by Jews who comprise the "tradition of dissent" Ellis is seeking to recover. One of the most notable Jewish intellectuals Ellis highlights is Noam Chomsky, who has noted that there is a very narrow framework of "thinkable thought" on the Middle East issue. Accordingly, this framework allows only "respectable criticism," that is, criticism that doesn't stray from the "dovish" liberal consensus. Nowhere does Ellis call for the delegitimation of Israel, but rather its de-absolutization—quite an important difference, but one that may not be allowed significance if one's aim is to stifle dissent.

There are important themes in Ellis's work, ignored by Fein in his review, from which many Christians can profit: the power and limits of Holocaust theology; that tradition of Jewish dissent that may help illuminate the vexing problematic of authority, dissent, and resistance increasingly experienced by many in the Catholic church; the "hidden tradition" observed by Hannah Arendt of critically thoughtful Jews who lived at the creative (and lonely) intersection of two cultures; and the recent efforts of Christian theologians to re-vision theology in the face of both the Holocaust and the massive suffering of many peoples around

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the world, including the Palestinians.

In his work on *The Prophets*, Abraham Joshua Heschel noted that the ancient Hebrew prophet "is an iconoclast, challenging the apparently holy, revered, and awesome. Beliefs cherished as certainties, institutions endowed with supreme sanctity, he exposes as scandalous pretensions." Catholics are by now quite familiar with the fiery speech of those Hebrew prophets from millennia ago. We would do well to attend to those contemporary Jewish voices of dissent, such as Ellis's, that are prophetic, both in their "annoying" and "irritating" (Fein's words) style and content. The dismissive reactions such voices receive from those who remain within the framework of respectable criticism, while predictable, ought to clue us in to some valuable and disturbing insights. MARK CHMIEL

The reviewer replies:

Rosemary Ruether has read her wishes into Marc Ellis's words. Had Ellis asked only that Israel accept "ordinary human moral responsibility" for serious injustices toward the Palestinians," as Ruether claims he did, we'd be having a very different argument. But I cannot derive from Ellis's explicit insistence that the Jews are a "naturally homeless people" and that the Jewish state must "be transformed into something else" a call for the acceptance of "ordinary" responsibility. It seems to me instead quite extraordinary to propose that the Jewish state cease to be a Jewish state, which is plainly what Ellis wants, his tone of injured innocence and his obfuscatory language notwithstanding.

Mark Chmiel raises an interesting problem. He wants people such as Noam Chomsky and Marc Ellis, whose voice he finds "prophetic," not merely to have their say but to be included in the community of discourse on these matters. But surely they have such a community already. And in that community, their hostility to Israel (and not merely to its policies) is in fact the norm rather than an expression of iconoclasm, let alone "prophecy." A defense of Israel as a Jewish state would be as unwelcome there as Ellis's call for the transformation of Israel into something other than a Jewish state would be outside its self-imposed boundaries.

Whether or not Israel deserves the bum rap Ellis gives it, Ellis's critique stands or falls on its merits, and not on its author's alleged iconoclasm or on his effort to position himself in the tradition of Jewish dissent. As I wrote in my review, there are large areas of agreement between Ellis and me. But in the end we are not part of the same community or tradition of dissent. Ellis wants to stand with Hannah Arendt, but Arendt wrote, "I am not against Israel on principle. I am against certain important Israeli policies." My argument with Ellis is precisely that the heart of his problem with Israel amounts to an indictment of Israel in principle.

Ellis recklessly asserts that my review contains an implicit charge of "Christian anti-Jewishness." There is not a single word in my review that gives rise to his offensive assertion—any more than I can be read as seeking his "summary excommunication." If Ellis is an island, disconnected from the mass of the Jewish community, that is not because I have read him out of the community, but because he has chosen to sep-

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arate himself from it. His attack on Jewish progressives is, it seems to me, a final act of bridge-burning. It is unseemly that he now complains of the heat. And it is unreasonable to expect that we come running to extinguish the flames he has set.

There's more; there always is. But the fact is that not every analysis, even one whose author thinks it "strong" and "nuanced," deserves "respectful attention." Respectful attention is not an entitlement; it must be earned. What every analysis deserves is a careful reading. Then, and only then, can its right to respect be determined. I have had my say; those who choose to read Ellis's book will decide for themselves which of us has understood his arguments and their implications more accurately.

LEONARD FEIN

The editors comment:

The final paragraph of Rosemary Ruether's letter prompts us to recall an earlier episode that we hope she will find instructive. When we published a review [June 2, 1989] of *The Wrath of Jonah: The Crisis of Religious Nationalism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, by Ms. Ruether and her husband, Herman J. Ruether, we were informed—not in writing but *viva voce*—that we must have invited Gregory Baum to review the book because we wanted to make sure that it would get a favorable notice. That was not the case. Neither is it the case that we chose a reviewer for the Ellis book with a view to preventing its getting a fair hearing. Ms. Ruether would do well to contemplate the difficulty (and inanity) of finding reviewers both knowledgeable and neutral on such topics as the Middle East, the music in Catholic parishes, or just-war theory.

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